

Message Text

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14-11

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 EB-07 AGR-05 AID-05 TRSE-00

COME-00 JUSE-00 CIEP-01 OMB-01 OPIC-03 SEC-01 /072 W

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O 102318Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9715

INFO DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

USCINCSO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEGUCIGALPA 1415

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, HO

SUBJECT: FURTHER REACTIONS TO UB BRIBE STORY

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 1372, 1386, 1387

1. EL CRONISTA, A MORNING DAILY, CARRIED A STORY ABOUT THE ALLEGED BRIBE IN WHICH IT QUOTES "SOURCES" SAYING THAT "THE TIMES WHEN MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES HAVE OVERTHROWN HONDURAN GOVERNMENTS HAVE ENDED." IT ALSO QUOTES A MILITARY OFFICER COMMENTING THAT THE STORY IS "ONE MORE ATTEMPT BY THE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES TO BRING THE GOVERNMENT INTO DISREPUTE AND STOP ITS PROGRESSIVE PROGRAMS THAT BENEFIT THE GREAT MAJORITY OF THE PEOPLE."

2. EL DIA, AN AFTERNOON DAILY, CARRIED WIRE STORIES FROM LATIN, AFP AND REUTER ON ITS FRONT PAGE REGARDING THE UB
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BRIBE. A COLUMN IN THE PAPER SEVERELY CRITICIZED UNITED

BRANDS AND CALLED FOR A COMPLETE INVESTIGATION OF THE FACTS. THE EDITORIAL SAYS IN PART, "WHY DID UNITED BRANDS DECIDE TO REVEAL THE NEWS PRECISELY AT THIS TIME, WHEN THE COUNTRY AND IN PARTICULAR THE CHIEF OF STATE, IS CONFRONTING A DIFFICULT AND COMPLICATED SITUATION? WHO'S BEHIND ALL THIS? WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING THE UNITED BRANDS SITUATION QUIET FOR SO LONG, AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR REVEALING THE NEWS? WE COULD SAY THAT UNITED BRANDS HAS COMMITTED A LAMENTABLE ACTION AGAINST THE HONDURAN PEOPLE, AND IN SO DOING, HAS ALSO INVOLVED THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES."

3. LA NOTICIA, AN AFTERNOON DAILY, CARRIES A FRONT PAGE HEADLINE, "THE CHARGE OF BRIBERY PLACES RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. IN DANGER." THE FRONT PAGE CARRIES STORIES FROM VARIOUS WIRE SERVICES ABOUT THE BACKGROUND OF THE BRIBERY CHARGE. A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL DECRIES THE ACTION OF UNITED FRUIT AND THE HONDURAN GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS WHO TOOK

THE BRIBE AS A "DIRTY TRANSACTION." IT STATES THAT THE MOVEMENT OF THE LT. COLONELS HAS "THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROVE THAT THEY HAVE A PASSIONATE DEVOTION TO HONESTY."

4. THE MAJORITY OF THE RADIO COMMENTATORS COINCIDED IN ATTACKING THE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES THAT OPERATE IN LATIN AMERICA DURING THEIR BROADCASTS ON APRIL 10. RADIO AMERICA'S ARMANDO CERRATO GAVE A LIST OF ACTS OF "INTERVENTION" ON THE PART OF UNITED BRANDS, MENTIONING THE

CREATION OF A HEALTH CENTER IN GUATEMALA, VACCINES IN COSTA RICA, AND HELP TO HURRICANE FIFI VICTIMS OF HONDURAS IN SEPTEMBER. HE ASSERTED THAT THESE ACTIVITIES WERE ALSO A KIND OF BRIBE OF MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES TO COUNTRIES IN WHICH THEY WORK. HERMAN ALLAN PADGETT OF DARIO MATUTINO STRONGLY CRITICIZED THE BANANA COMPANY

AND DEMANDED A PROMPT EXPLANATION OF THE SCANDAL NO MATTER HOW SHATTERING THE TRUTH. GUSTAVO ACOSTA MEJIA OF DARIO MATUTINO ALSO EMPHASIZED THE INTERVENTION OF THE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES AND DEMANDED THAT THE MATTER BE IN-CONFIDENTIAL

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VESTIGATED, NO MATTER WHO THE CULPRIT MAY BE.

5. MAIRENA TERCERO, A RADIO COMMENTATOR, IN A BROADCAST APRIL 10 CRITICIZED THE COMMITTEE ESTABLISHED BY THE GOH TO INVESTIGATE THE UB BRIBERY STORY. HE ARGUED THAT THE COMMITTEE LACKED THE CAPACITY AND EXPERIENCE TO DEAL WITH SUCH A MATTER. HE OBSERVED THAT THE BEST THING WOULD BE FOR THE HONDURAN COMPTROLLERS OFFICE AND THE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE TO TAKE CARE OF THE CASE.
THE NATIONALIST PARTY, ALSO CRITICIZED THE COMMITTEE FOR
NOT BEING AN IMPARTIAL BODY. HE CALLED FOR THE INCLUSION
OF INDEPENDENT INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE NO CONNECTION WITH THE
GOVERNMENT.

6. COMMENT: AS POINTED OUT IN PREVIOUS TELEGRAMS, THE MEDIA
HAS FOCUSED ITS MAIN ATTENTION ON ATTACKING UNITED BRANDS
AND MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES IN GENERAL. THERE IS NO REASON
TO BELIEVE THAT THESE ATTACKS WILL LESSEN IN THE DAYS TO COME
OR THAT THEY WILL BECOME MORE MODERATE.
SANCHEZ

RAFAEL BARDALES BUESO, PRESIDENT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF

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